STATEMENT OF RAYMOND A. SALAZAR, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF CIVIL AVIATION SECURITY, FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES AND TRANSPORTATION, CONCERNING PASSENGER SCREENING AT DOMESTIC AIRPORTS. October 22, 1987.

Madam Chairwoman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to appear before the Subcommittee today to discuss the results of the General Accounting Office review of FAA data on preboard passenger screening tests and the status of the FAA's response to the Secretary's Safety Review Task Force Report on domestic airport security regarding passenger and carry-on baggage screening.

At the time of my appearance before you last June, I indicated that the GAO analysis was based on limited data collected over a four month period. Their analysis, which was consistent with ours, indicated an average 80 percent success rate in the detection of test objects at screening checkpoints. We conducted over 6,000 tests at 136 domestic airports involving 64 air carriers. The results of those tests indicate that the average success rate remains at the 80 percent level. We are not satisfied with that success rate, and are taking aggressive actions to improve the detection of test objects by the screening system. I continue to believe, though, as I indicated in your earlier hearing, that our domestic screening program remains an effective means of combatting aircraft hijackings. The deterrent

effect of the likelihood of a weapon being detected by the screening system continues to remain high; the historical record of airport screening in this country demonstrates that fact.

Since the last hearing before this Subcommittee, we have initiated a series of actions, predominately as a result of the Secretary's Safety Review Task Force reports on aviation airport security, which are designed to improve safety in air transportation. We have taken a number of specific steps designed to improve the success rate of the detection of test objects at screening points at our domestic airports. I would like to briefly update the Subcommittee on these efforts.

o On October 1, we amended the air carriers' security program to require air carriers to detect FAA-approved test objects during screening system operator tests conducted by the FAA. This new regulatory requirement permits aggressive enforcement action to be taken by the FAA when there is a failure to detect such test objects.

o Policy guidance has been provided to all regional and field offices to implement standardization of enforcement actions.

o We are developing procedures to consolidate enforcement actions

against a single carrier for security violations into a single case in the region where the carrier's headquarters is located.

o Testing of screening personnel continues. We have developed and are installing an automated system to track and analyze these test results.

o We are contracting with academia to review and validate screener employment qualifications developed by the FAA and to develop screener pre-selection testing and evaluation. We expect a preliminary report within 45 days and a final report within 90 days.

o We have received a preliminary report from academia on the impact of various factors on the efficiency of preboard screening, including screener pay and incentive awards. The report is currently being reviewed.

o By the end of this month, we expect to provide FAA field personnel and air carriers with a proposed amendment that will specify in greater detail the duties and responsibilities of ground security coordinators, and will include a requirement for these coordinators to become actively involved in screener training.

o We have emphasized the need for FAA personnel to be more involved in the training of screening personnel. Moreover, we are working with industry to develop X-ray equipment that will assist in training screeners.

o We have instituted a new category of airports called Category X airports, which consists of those airports where more stringent security measures are being implemented. A Category X airport is one that has over 25 million persons screened; one million international passengers; or a threat assessment. We are currently developing enhanced security requirements for these airports, and expect to provide these requirements to our field personnel and industry by the end of October.

o The X-Ray equipment currently in use at Category X airports has been reviewed. We are establishing higher standards for X-ray equipment in use at these airports. When these criteria are complete, equipment not meeting the new requirements will have to be removed from service at Category X airports. We are also evaluating the adequacy of sensitivity settings of walk-through metal detection devices and are considering establishing higher standards.

o We are continuing to analyze the test procedures we use in our screening system to ensure that they accurately reflect the

detection equipment's capabilities and the nature of the materials they detect.

o We are conducting tests at Category X and Category I airports to determine the adequacy of screening equipment settings. A Category I airport is one where two million persons are screened annually.

o On September 21, we began testing a new X-ray system, a backscatter unit, which reflects an X-Ray to better enable identification of light materials such as plastic explosives and handguns.

o We have entered into two contracts with research firms to develop false image projection for use in computer-enhanced testing. False image projection means a bomb or weapon would appear on the normal X-Ray image to test and instruct screeners.

o On August 21, we amended airport security programs to require airports to develop contingency plans. We are working with airports to ensure development of adequate contingency plans, and have provided FAA field personnel with guidance to assist in determining the acceptability of the plans.

o On October 1, we amended the air carriers' security program to require air carriers to detect FAA-approved test objects during

screening system operator tests conducted by the FAA. This new regulatory requirement permits enforcement action to be taken by the FAA when there is a failure to detect such test objects.

o The cleanup effort of the inspection subsystem of the Civil Aviation Security Information System (CASIS) data base is nearly complete. We expect this subsystem of CASIS to be operational by November 2.

These measures illustrate the thrust of our overall efforts to foster improvements in our overall security posture. We are optimistic that these steps will make a good security system even better. I can assure you that we are committed to taking all necessary steps to continue to refine the technology, procedures, and regulatory framework associated with civil aviation security.

Madam Chairman, that concludes my prepared remarks. I would be pleased to respond to any questions you or other Members of the Subcommittee may have.